

# Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



## **Developing a System of Marine Protected Areas in California: An Introduction to the Social and Institutional Network Aspects of the MLPA Initiative**

**Presented at the National System of MPAs Partners Training  
June 22, 2010 • Tiburon, CA**

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# Overview

- An introduction to marine protected areas in California and the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA)
- An introduction to the MLPA Initiative, a marine protected area planning process
- An overview of the social network aspect of the MLPA Initiative
- An overview of capacity building to create an institutional network



# Marine Protected Areas

- **State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA)**
  - Prohibits some recreational and/or commercial extractive activities
- **State Marine Park (SMP)**
  - Prohibits all commercial extractive activities and potentially some recreational activities.
- **State Marine Reserve (SMR)**
  - Prohibits all extractive activities





# Marine Life Protection Act

- **Signed into law in 1999**
  - Improve the design and management of marine protected areas (MPAs) in state waters
  - Focuses on marine ecosystems and habitats rather than single species
- **Requires, in part:**
  - Use “best readily available science”
  - Involvement of stakeholders and other interested parties
  - Marine Life Protection Program with six goals and adaptive management
  - Master plan for MPAs and master plan “science team”



Mean high tide to  
approximately  
three nautical  
miles offshore



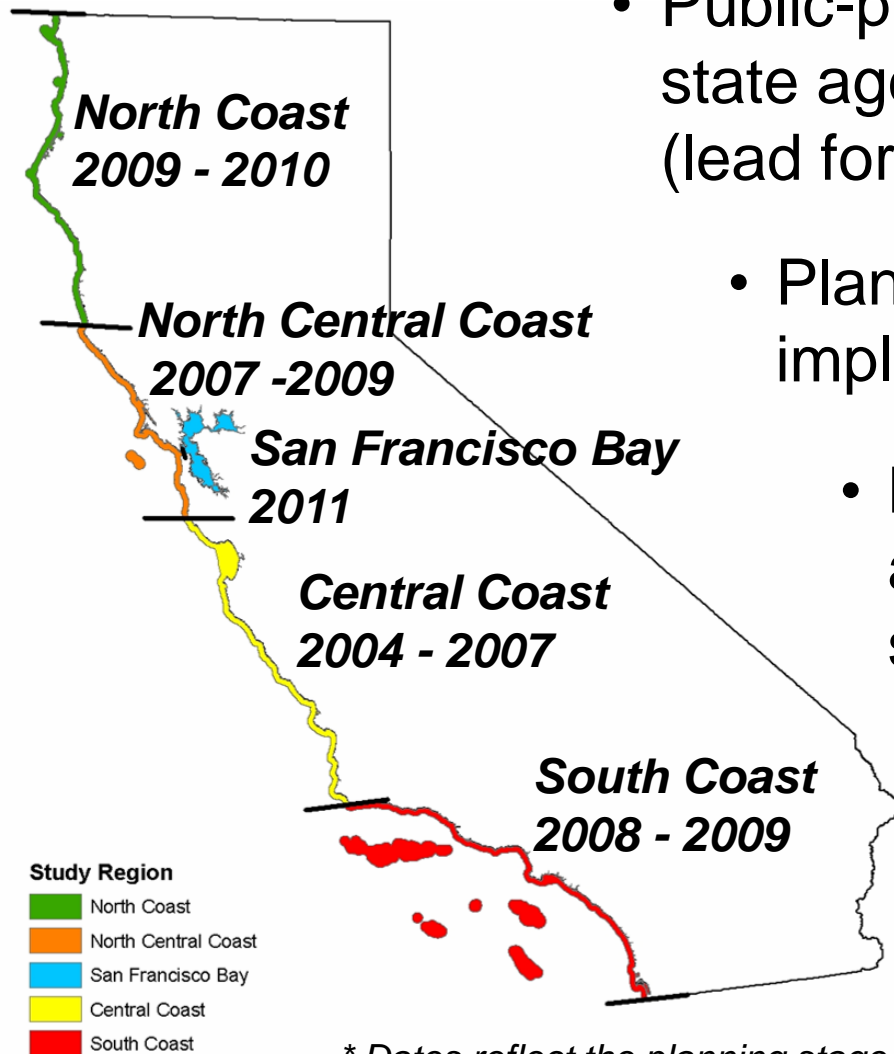
# Six Goals of MLPA

1. To protect the ***natural diversity and abundance*** of marine life, and the ***structure, function and integrity*** of marine ecosystems
2. To help ***sustain, conserve, and protect*** marine life populations, including those of economic value, and ***rebuild*** those that are depleted
3. To ***improve recreational, educational and study opportunities*** provided by marine ecosystems that are ***subject to minimal human disturbance***, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity
4. To protect ***marine natural heritage***, including protection of ***representative and unique marine life habitats*** in California waters for their intrinsic value
5. To ensure that California's MPAs have clearly defined objectives, effective management measures, and adequate enforcement, and are based on ***sound scientific guidelines***
6. To ensure that the state's MPAs are ***designed and managed***, to the extent possible, ***as a network***





# California MLPA Initiative



- Public-private partnership among two state agencies and private foundation (lead for five other foundations)
- Planning process designed to help implement the MLPA
- Began in 2004 using a regional approach, leading to biological, social and governance network
- Citizen-driven, transparent process with public input at every stage

*\* Dates reflect the planning stage only; additional time is required for the regulatory process*



# North Coast Planning Process

## Guidance

BRTF  
SAT

DFG  
State Parks  
MLPA I-Team

## Round 1

External proposed  
MPA arrays from  
community groups

BRTF  
SAT

DFG  
State Parks  
MLPA I-Team

Review & Feedback

## Round 2

NCRSG develops its  
draft MPA proposals

BRTF  
SAT

DFG  
State Parks  
MLPA I-Team

Review & Feedback

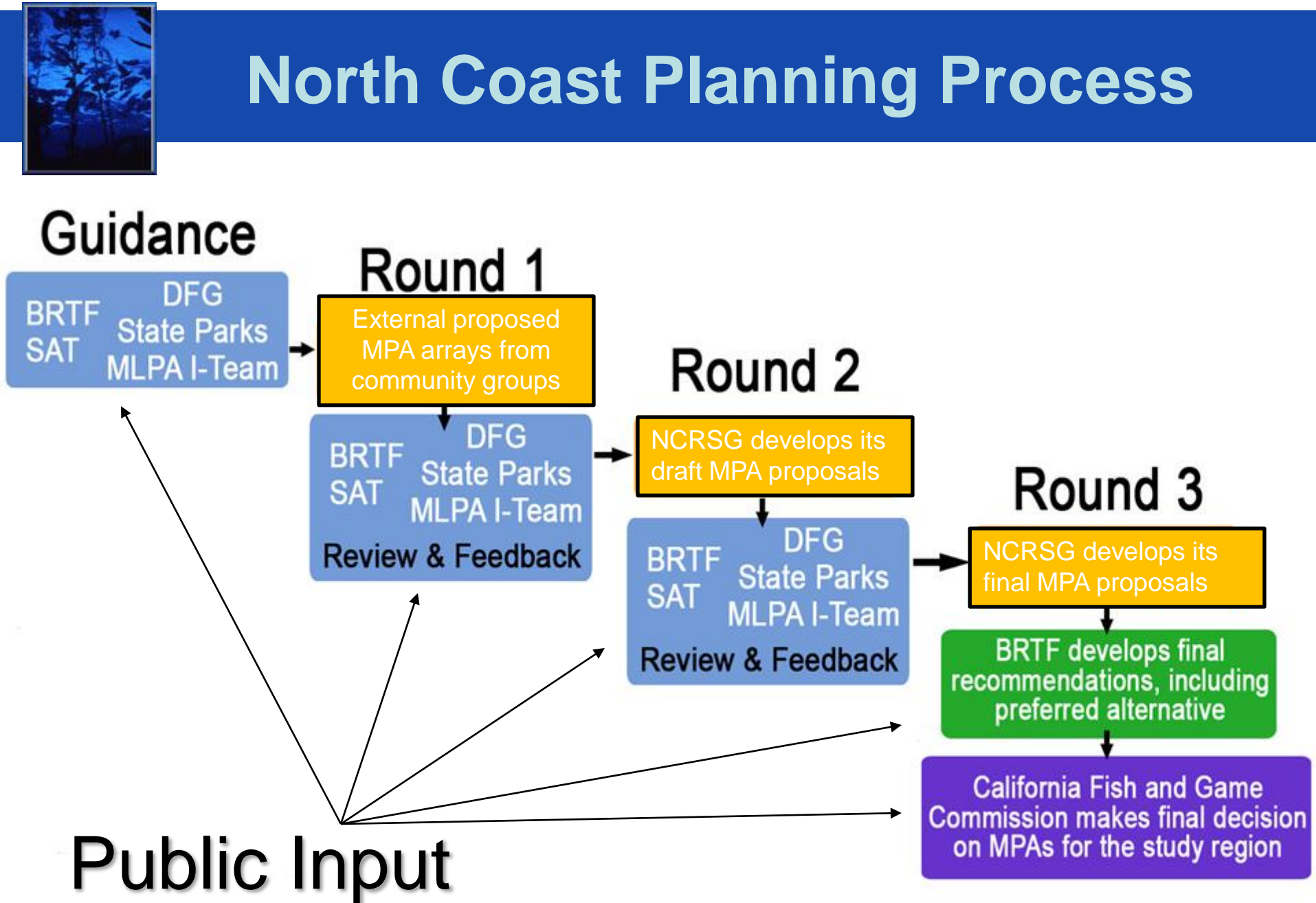
## Round 3

NCRSG develops its  
final MPA proposals

BRTF develops final  
recommendations, including  
preferred alternative

California Fish and Game  
Commission makes final decision  
on MPAs for the study region

## Public Input





# Participants

- Formal institutional partners



CALIFORNIA  
*natural  
resources*  
AGENCY

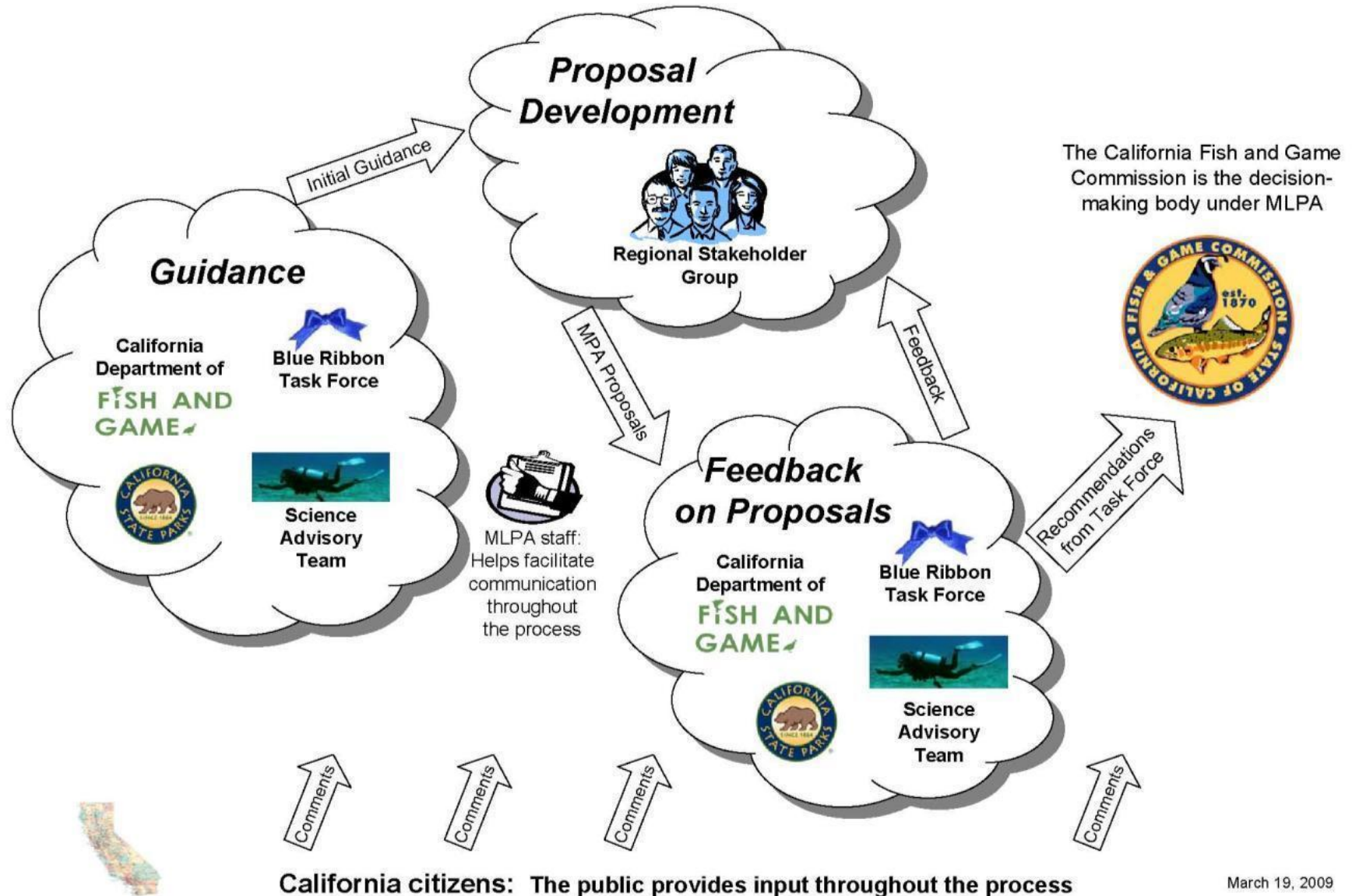
RLFF

- MLPA Initiative groups
  - blue ribbon task force
  - regional stakeholder group
  - science advisory team
  - staff and contractors
- Federal, state, local and tribal governments
- General public and interested parties





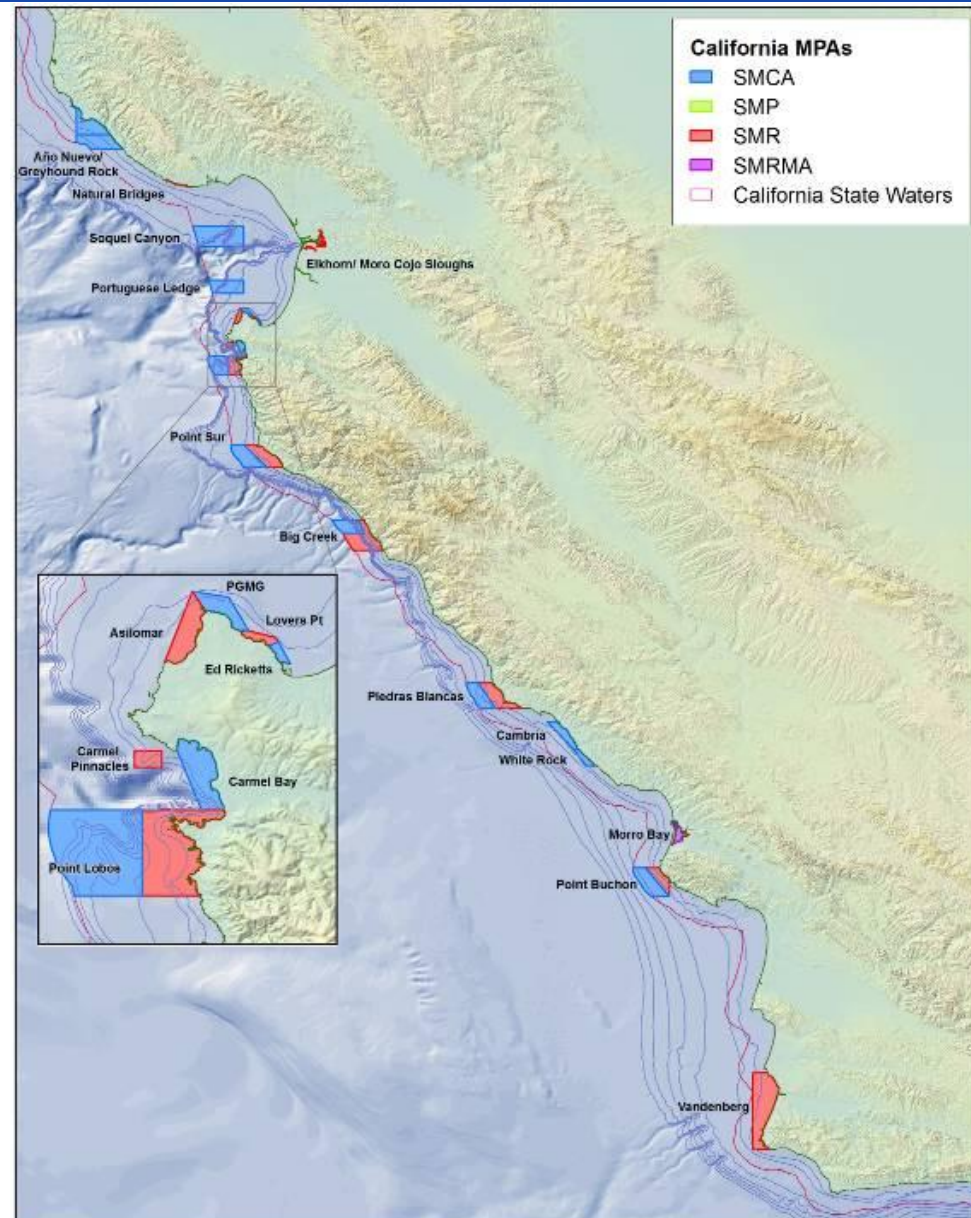
# Social Network: Information Flow





# Outcome in Central Coast

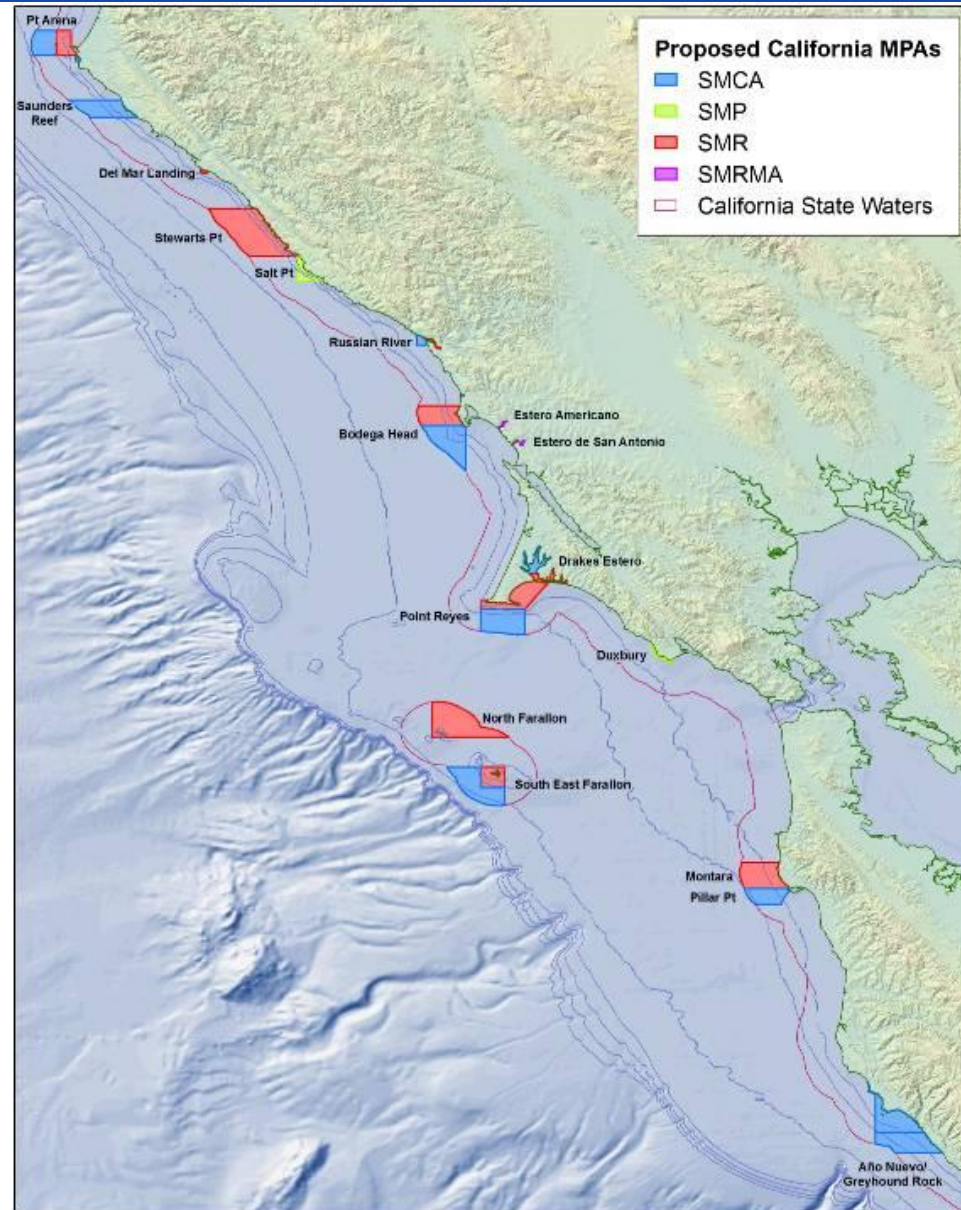
- Adopted in 2007
- 10 no-take marine reserves; approximately 7.5% of the study region
- 28 MPAs covering approximately 18% of the study region and 1 marine managed area





# Outcome in North Central Coast

- Adopted in 2009
- 11 no-take marine reserves; approximately 11% of the study region
- Total of 23 MPAs covering approximately 20% of the study region and 3 marine managed areas





# Social Network: Planning Tools

- Joint fact-finding; regional profile for study region
- Online access to multiple data sets, including new commercial and recreational fishing data
- MarineMap, online planning tool
- Science (twice peer-reviewed) and feasibility guidelines; feedback loop with analyses of draft MPA proposals using guidelines







# Building an Institutional Network

- MOU for initiative includes an objective of building capacity within state agencies
- Enhancing skills sets of staff in managing agencies
- Encouraging communication between managing agencies
- Clarifying legal authorities; state agencies, tribes, military
- Monitoring entity outside state government
- Building support in the public realm (i.e., aquariums, NGOs, Thank You Ocean Campaign)
- Establishing long-term funding
- Initiating partnerships

